

THE NAMES OF GOD IN HOLY SCRIPTURE

by John T. Polk, II

INTRODUCTION:

1. The Bible is the gradual unfolding of the Revelation of God.
2. Proof of God's Existence is found in the Created World (**Romans 1:19-25**);

**The Nature, Names, and Notices of God
ARE ONLY IN THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD!**
It is impossible to know about God without a study of the Bible!

3. A name change indicates power over one's person (**2 Kings 23:34; 24:17**).
4. God's Name may not change (**Exodus 20:7; Leviticus 19:12; 5:4; 18:21; 24:11, 16**).
5. God's Name may be used to stand for:
 - a. General Revelation (**Psalms 8:1, 9; 89:12; 23:3**)
 - b. Special Revelation (**Isaiah 30:27; Deuteronomy 12:11; 1 Kings 8:29; Jeremiah 3:17; 7:12**).
6. For Jesus Christ to be God in the flesh (cf **Colossians 2:9**), He must possess all the qualities represented by God's Name(s). (cf **John 14:8-11**)

DISCUSSION:

I. *Elohim* (1st used in **Genesis 1:1) - "God"**

A. Uses

1. of 2570 times, 2310 are of the "Living God" and 245 are common, or lower, senses.
2. plurality (Hebrew *-im*)
 - a. Sometimes used with or without a definite article
 - b. *Generally with a singular verb when used of the True God*
 - c. Mostly the adjective is *singular* (**2 Kings 19:4**),
sometimes, however, the adjective is *plural* (**Joshua 24:19**),
except in **Genesis 20:13; 35:7; 2 Samuel 7:23** (cf **1 Chronicles 17:12**)

B. Meaning

1. Root **el** (*ul*), "to be strong" cf **Genesis 31:29** - "power" (over 250-X)
2. Root **Alaha**, "worshipped, adored, struck with astonishment,
fear, or terror, hence, adored with sacred horror or veneration" (Idolatry)
3. Arabic - **Allah**; Hebrew - **Eloah**; Akkadian (Babylonian) - **ilu** (cf **Genesis 31:53**) (Muslim)
4. ***Elohim* occurs only in Hebrew and no other Semitic language**, hence:
 - a. It **cannot** have come from Canaanitish idolatrous language;
 - b. Devil broadened the term to include more than just "God" as he has done with every word of truth! **Matthew 24:11, 23-25; Luke 21:8**

C. Variations

1. Used of God with singular adjectives, verbs, and plural pronouns:

Genesis 1:26; 3:22; 11:7; 20:13; 31:7, 53; 25:7; Deuteronomy 4:7; 5:23; Joshua 24:19; 1 Samuel 4:8; 2 Samuel 7:23; Psalm 58:12; Isaiah 6:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 23:36

2. Only pagans used an actual plural to refer to the true God:

1 Samuel 4:8; Deuteronomy 5:26; 2 Samuel 7:23; Psalm 58:11

3. Used of others than the True God:

a. Persons with a Divine Relationship

(1) **John 10:34-35 [Psalm 82:1, 6];**

(2) **Exodus 4:16** ("for" **Elohim**, 6:7); **7:1; 22:8-9, 28; 21:6; 22:8-9, 28; 21:6;**

(3) **1 Samuel 28:12**

b. Angels

(1) **Psalm 8:4-6 [Hebrews 2:6-8]**

(2) **Psalm 97:7** - [*Septuagint* "angels"]

(3) **Deuteronomy 32:43** - [**Hebrews 1:6**]

4. Corruptions

a. Began in **Genesis 3:5**

b. **Genesis 35: (1) 2, 4** - "strange" (Heb. *nahor* -to know AND not to know)

(1) **Genesis 31:19 *teraphim*; v. 30 *elohim*; 30:27; 31: 29, 50, 53**

(2) of Egypt (**Exodus 12:12, 23; Numbers 33:4; Leviticus 19:4; Exodus 23:34; 32:3-5**)

(3) no other *Elohim* (**Exodus 20:3; 23:13; Deuteronomy 4:39; 32:37, 39; 2 Kings 19:18**) cf **Matthew 6:24**

D. Combinations

Used to Describe "God"

1. **El-Elyon**- "God Most High" (**Genesis 14:18-22; Numbers 24:16; Deuteronomy 32:8; Psalm 9:2; 18:13; 78:35; 83:18; 89:27; 91:1-2**)

a. "Most High" (Heb. *marom* -"exalted") **Micah 6:6; Psalm 99:2; 113:4; 138:6; Isaiah 57:15**

b. **Elyon** not confined to sacred use (**Genesis 40:17; 1 Kings 9:8; 2 Chronicles 7:21; 2 Kings 18:17; 23:20; 32:30; Nehemiah 3:25; Jeremiah 20:2; 36:10**)

c. Jesus Is "the Son of the Highest" (**Luke 1:30-32**)

2. **El-Hai**-"Living God" (**Genesis 16:14; Deuteronomy 5:26; 1 Samuel 17:26; Jeremiah 23:36**).

a. In **Joshua 3:10**, *El-Hai* is in singular number, without a definite article, and as a proper noun.

b. b. Jesus continues to live **Romans 6:8-9; 8:34; Hebrews 7:22-25**

3. **El-Shaddai**- "God Almighty"
 - a. Akkadian - *shadu*, "mountain"; Hebrew-*shadah*, to shed, pour out"
 - b. **Genesis 17:1-2; 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 49:25; Exodus 6:3; Ezekiel 10:5**
 - c. without *El* - **Numbers 24:4,16; Ruth 1:20-21; Psalm 68:14; 91:1; Isaiah 13:6; Ezekiel 1:24; Joel 1:15**
 - d. Greek, *pantokrator* - **2 Corinthians 6:18; Revelation 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; Revelation 19:6, 15; 21:22**
4. **El-Olam**- "the everlasting God" (**Genesis 21:33**)
 - a. God is not limited by time, place, space, or thoughts as men are
 - b. **Psalm 90:2, 4; Job 10:5; Isaiah 40:28-29**
 - c. God's Temple (**Psalm 2:4; Habakkuk 2:20; Psalm 139:1-6, 7-12, 13-19**)
 - d. **1 Samuel 23:11; Jeremiah 38:17, 20; Psalm 147:5**—infinite
 - e. Jesus is "from everlasting" **Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:4; Revelation 1:10-18**
5. **Elohim-Qdhoshim**- "Holy God"
 - a. **Joshua 24:19**- Jehovah
 - b. Used in the singular: **2 Kings 19:22; Psalm 78:41; 89:18**
 - c. May be a descriptive phrase, and not a proper name **Proverbs 9:10; Hosea 11:12**
6. **El-Beth-el**- "God of Beth-el" (**Genesis 35:6, 7**)
7. **El-Elohe-Israel**- "God, the God of Israel" (**Genesis 33:20**)

It is also incorporated into peoples' names:

8. **Eldad**- "God has loved" (**Numbers 11:26-29**)
9. **Elead**- "God has testified" (**1 Chronicles 7:21**)
10. **Eleazar**- "God has helped" (**Exodus 6:23**)
11. **Eli**- "My God" (**Matthew 27:46**) [*eloi*]
12. **Eli**- "God is High" (**1 Samuel 1:9; Matthew 27:46**) [*heli*]
13. **Elijah**- "God is Jehovah" or "Jehovah is God" (**1 Kings 17:1; Matthew 27:47-49**)
14. **Eliab**- "God is Father" (**1 Samuel 16:6, 7**)
15. **Elasah**- "God has made" (**Ezra 10:22; Jeremiah 29:3**)

II. *Jehovah* ("LORD" in the King James Version)

A. Unique only to the God of Israel - *always the proper name for the Person of Elohim.*

1. The Hebrews said "the *Elohim*" not "the *Jehovah*";
"my God but not "my *Jehovah*";
"the God of Israel" not "the *Jehovah* of Israel";
"the living God" not "the living *Jehovah*" (**Psalm 83:18**)
2. A name not revealed to the patriarchs (**Exodus 6:3**) and first revealed to Moses in the burning bush (**Exodus 3: 4-6, 12-15; 6:3; 34:1-9**).

(cf **Deuteronomy 28:58; Leviticus 24:11-16**)

NOTE: the name "*Jehovah*" is used beginning with **Genesis 2:4** to describe the *Elohim* (Creator), proof of Mosaic authorship of **Genesis**, for not before the burning bush was this name of *Jehovah* known. If God's Law to Israel was not given before but through Moses, then God's Proper Name was not known before but through Moses. If not -- why not?

a. "I AM" is present tense, hence also translated "I will"

(**Exodus 3:12; Genesis 26:3; 31:3; Acts 18:10; John 8:58**)

b. "I AM THAT I AM" is a self-existent God. "I AM PRESENT IS WHAT I AM" or God owes His Existence to no one else.

(cf **John 8:58; Revelation 1:8; Acts 17:24-25**)

c. The Greek god "Apollo" at Delphi had inscribed above the door *EI*, "Thou art," probably taken from the Hebrew "*Jehovah*".

d. The Emphasis is that "*Jehovah*" changes not (**Malachi 3:6**), even toward His People (**Exodus 3:12,13,15; Deuteronomy 7:9; Isaiah 26:4**)

e. The vowels are omitted in the Hebrew, probably to denote the sacredness of the name, leaving a tetragrammaton (*JHWH*). Since the Jews were not to profane God's Name, by leaving out the vowels, they would run no risk of altering or accidentally misusing that name.

Difficulty presents itself by the variations created by attempting to restore in English what the Jews have long since forgotten - God's Whole Name; hence, *Yahweh, Jehovah, Yahwe*.

**NO ONE KNOWS OR HAS HAD THIS COMPLETE NAME REVEALED TO THEM
SINCE MOSES' SPELLING WAS ABBREVIATED!**

3. "Jehovah" is used some 2500 times in the Old Testament; sometimes *Jah* as a shortened form (**Exodus 15:2, 6; 17:16; Psalm 77:11; 89:8**).
e.g. *hallelu-jah* or "praise Jehovah" some 35 times in **Psalms**.
4. Passages where "Jehovah" refers to "Jesus":
 - a. **Joel 2:32 - Romans 10:13**
 - b. **Isaiah 6:9,10 - John 12:41**
 - c. **Isaiah 40:3 - Mark 1:1-8; Matthew 3:1-12**
 - d. **Malachi 3:1 - Matthew 11:7-15**
 - e. **Isaiah 8:13,14 - Romans 9:33; 1 Peter 2:6-8**
 - f. **Isaiah 45:23-25 - Philippians 2:9** ("confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father")

B. Variations:

1. **Jehovah-jireh** - **Genesis 22:5, 7, 8,14** - "LORD who provides"
 - a. **jireh** - Hebrew for "to see" (English "pro-vision"=seeing beforehand; hence "providence"), also "seer" or "prophet"
(**1 Chronicles 9:22; 26:28; 2 Samuel 15:27; 2 Chronicles 16:7**).
 - b. "Moriah" (**Genesis 22:2**) is from the same root as "jireh".
 - c. Jesus is "provider" (**John 8:56-58; 3:16; Luke 22:35**
[cf **Deuteronomy 2:7**]; **Romans 8:32; 4:25; 1 John 4:9**).
Isaac was received back "in a figure" (**Hebrews 11:19**)
--so was Jesus Christ (**John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 5:11-13**).
2. **Jehovah-rophe** - **Exodus 15:22-26** - "LORD who heals" (cf **Exodus 23:25**)
 - a. **rophe** - is used 60-70 times in the Old Testament, and always means "to heal", "cure", "physician".
 - b. Man needs healing (**Isaiah 1:5, 6; Jeremiah 17:9-14**).
 - c. God heals:
 - (1) Physically- **Numbers 12:13; Psalm 103:2-3; Jeremiah 30:15; 14:19-20**;
 - (2) Spiritually- **Jeremiah 30:17; 3:22; 30:26; 61:1**.
 - d. Jesus heals:
 - (1) Physically- **Matthew 9:6** to prove He Is God, but those miracles have ceased (cf **John 20:30, 31**);
 - (2) Spiritually- (**Galatians 3:12; Romans 10:8-10 [Deuteronomy 30:14]; John 5:40 [Jeremiah 8:21-22; 2 Chronicles 36:16]; Luke 4:18, 23 [Isaiah 61:1]; Mark 4:23; 11:4-5; John 5:36; Matthew 9:12-13; John 4:13, 14; John 7:37-38 [Isaiah 12:3]; Revelation 22:1-2, 17**).

3. **Jehovah-nissi** – **Exodus 17:15** - "LORD, my banner"

- a. Israel had gone from bitter water (**Exodus 15**) to no food (**Exodus 16**) to no water (**Exodus 17**) to being attacked by Amalek (**Exodus 17:8-16**). Amalek, grandson of Esau (**Genesis 36:12**), first of the nations to oppose Israel (**Numbers 24:20**). cf **Exodus 17:14-16**; **Deuteronomy 25:17-18**; **1 Samuel 15:2-3, 26-28**; **2 Samuel 1:1-16**; **1 Chronicles 4:43**.
- B. **nissi** - "help, or salvation"
- c. Hoshea (**Numbers 13:8** means "to give deliverance or help"; Joshua (**Numbers 13:16**) means "Jehovah is help"; Jesus is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew "Joshua" and means "saviour or helper" (**Matthew 1:22**) and Jesus claims to be the sinner's "banner" (**John 6:44-47**; **12:32**).
- d. The number, size, or strength of the enemy doesn't matter (**Deuteronomy 20:1-4**; **Leviticus 26:8**; **1 Samuel 17:26, 32, 36-37, 45-47**)
- e. God fights for His People (**Deuteronomy 20:3-4**; **Psalms 118:6**; [**Romans 8:31**]; **Isaiah 13:2-4, 11**; **Jeremiah 51:12, 27**; **Numbers 14:42-45**; **Joshua 7:12**).
The same is promised today (**1 John 5:19**; **2:16**; **Galatians 6:17**; **Romans 7:18, 23**; **2 Thessalonians 2:4**; **Matthew 4:8-9**; **Ephesians 6:11-17**; **2 Timothy 2:3-4**; **4:7-8**; **Jude 3**)
Christians will be victorious (**John 3:14**; **16:33**; **Acts 2:38-41**; **Matthew 28:18-20**; **1 John 5:4**; **Ephesians 1:17-22**; **Romans 8:31-37**; **1 Corinthians 15:57**; **2 Corinthians 2:14**)

4. **Jehovah-Shalom** - **Judges 6:24** - "LORD is peace"

- a. The name of Gideon's altar
- b. God is still the God of peace (**Romans 15:33**; **2 Corinthians 13:11**; **Hebrews 13:20**).
- c. Jesus is our peace (**Isaiah 9:6**; **Luke 2:14**; **10:5-6**; **John 14:27**; **16:33**; **Romans 5:1-2**; **Ephesians 2:14-17**; **Hebrews 6:19-7:3**; **Luke 1:78-79**).

5. **Jehovah-M'Kaddesh** - **Leviticus 20:7, 8** - "LORD who sanctifies"

- a. Hebrew "dedicate, consecrate"
God is sanctified (**Deuteronomy 4:35**; **Isaiah 44:6**; **45:21**; **1 Samuel 2:2**; **Isaiah 6:3**; **Hosea 11:9**; **Psalms 51:11**; **Isaiah 63:8-11**; **Leviticus 10:3**; **Isaiah 8:13**; **1 Chronicles 16:29**; **Psalms 29:2**)
- b. There is only one such God (**Exodus 20:3**; **Deuteronomy 10:17**), idols are a thing for naught (**Psalms 96:5**; **Jeremiah 16:20**; **1 Corinthians 8:4-6**)

- c. God sanctified:
 - sabbath (**Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:8, 11**), convocation of Israel (**Leviticus 23**),
 - Day of Atonement (**Leviticus 25:10**), Jeremiah (**Jeremiah 1:5**),
 - first-born of Israel (**Exodus 13:2**), head of the high priest (**Exodus 28:36**),
 - all people of Israel (**Deuteronomy 7:6**).
 - d. Jesus is the Holy One who sanctifies (**Acts 3:14; Luke 1:35; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 6:11; Titus 3:5-8; Hebrews 10:10; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 2:9; Ephesians 1:4; 2:4; 2 Timothy 1:9; John 17:16, 17, 19; Galatians 5:22-23, 25-27; Romans 12:1-2; Hebrews 12:10, 14; 1 John 3:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; 5:23**)
6. **Jehovah-Tsidkenu** - **Jeremiah 23: 5, 6** - "LORD our righteousness"
- a. Hebrew *tsaddik*, "to be straight or stiff"
 - Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 2:4; Hebrews 12:10, 14; 1 John 3:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; 5:23**
 - (1) God is "upright" (**Psalm 129:4; Isaiah 45:21; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 119:142, 144; 89:14; 97:2; James 1:17; 1 John 1:5**)
 - (2) Men's dealings should be (**Leviticus 19:35, 36; Deuteronomy 25:15; Job 31:6; Psalm 62:9; Acts 2:40; 4:19-20**)
 - (3) Men must "straighten up" (**Deuteronomy 9:4-6; Daniel 9:7, 8; Jeremiah 17:9; Psalm 14:3; Romans 3:20, 23; Exodus 23:7; Acts 2:36-41; 8:21**)
 - (4) Jesus is the "Holy One" (**Acts 3:14; Isaiah 49:7; Hebrews 1:8, 9 [Psalm 11:7]; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Peter 3:18; Romans 10:4; 3:26; Philippians 3:9**)

III. Lord (Hebrew "*Adonai*", Greek "*Kurios*")

A. Background of word

1. *Adonai* used 300 times in Old Testament, mostly plural and possessive;
 - a. when used of men, it is always the singular form *Adon*;
 - b. when used of God, it is always plural form "*Adonai*";
 - c. the English word "Lord" is from the Anglo-Saxon words "loaf" plus "to supply, give out", thus it signifies "the giver of bread"
2. David used *Adonai* (singular) to refer to one member of the Godhead in **Psalm 110:1** - "The Jehovah said to my Adonai" (only in English translation does "the" occur, seeking to separate one "Lord" from the other "Lord" referred to in the verse.
 - a. Jesus quoted this as referring to Himself (**Matthew 22:41-46**)
 - b. Jesus is awaiting for the last enemy to become His footstool (**Acts 2:32-36; 1 Corinthians 15:25-28; Hebrews 1:1-4, 13**)
3. Jesus is "Lord and God" (**Psalm 35:23; 38:15; John 20:28-29**)

B. Combination form *Adonai Elohim* - "Lord God"

1. First used in **Genesis 15:2** (**Genesis 15:8; 2 Samuel 7:18-20; Psalm 114:7; 141:8; Psalm 109:21-28; Jeremiah 1:6; Ezekiel 13:9; 23:49; 24:24; 28:24; 29:16; Daniel 9:3-10,19**)
2. Jesus is "Lord" (**Isaiah 42:1, 4, 6; Philippians 2:7-8; Hebrews 10:7 [Psalm 40:6-8]; John 8:29; Romans 15:3; Matthew 20:28; Luke 22:27; Hebrews 2:10; John 13:13; John 13:15-16; Acts 2:36-38; 9:6; Romans 1:1-7; Galatians 1:16-17; 6:17; 1 Timothy 1:12; Acts 20:24; 2 Peter 2:1; Luke 6:46**)

C. Combination form *Adonai Jehovah* - "Lord Jehovah" or "Lord LORD"

(**Exodus 4:5; Psalm 8:1, 9 [Hebrews 2:5-8]; 97:5; 135:5**)

IV. *Melekh* - Exodus 15:18 - "reigning, King"

A. Used of God

1. He rules over all (**Numbers 23:21; Deuteronomy 35:5; Psalm 24:7-10; 29:10; Isaiah 43:15; 6:5; Malachi 1:14; Zechariah 14:16**)
2. Jesus rules (**2 Peter 3:5-7; 1 Timothy 6:13-16; Colossians 1:13-18**)

B. Used of angels

1. **Genesis 32:1,3; 31:13; Exodus 3:4-6; Matthew 2:13; 28:2, 5,18-20**
2. "Angel" is limited or defined by the following word(s):
Judges 6:20-21; 13:3, 9; 6:111-16; Joshua 6:2; Zechariah 3:2; Genesis 16:7-13 (E)

C. of idols - "Moloch" may be a corrupted form of *Melekh* (**1 Kings 11:7; 2 Kings 23:10**)

Conclusion:

1. Jesus Christ must be believed as God (**John 8:12-30**; **1 John 2:22-24**; **4:1-6**, **12-15**; **5:1-13**).
2. "It would be deeply interesting to show how each of the names of God finds its embodiment in **Him** who is 'the Word of the Father.' Thus, as **Elohim**, Christ exercised Divine power, and also communicated supernatural powers to others. As **Shaddai**, Christ was all-sufficient, possessed of unsearchable riches, and always ready to pour forth His benefits on man. As '**Elion**, Christ was exalted in moral and spiritual nature, and also, as to position, made higher than the heavens. Lastly, as **Jehovah**, Christ is 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,' ready to save to the uttermost, in close communion with His people, fulfilling all the Divine promises, and appointed to be 'Judge of all the earth.'"

(Synonyms of The Old Testament, by Robert Baker Girdlestone, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1897, p.44)

3. It is impossible to believe and fully appreciate the significance of Jesus Christ without studying the Old Testament;
4. It is impossible to believe in Jesus Christ as God and be complacent, indifferent, or casual in proclaiming this to "every creature". THIS DOCTRINE DETERMINES WHICH CHURCH, WORSHIP, BAPTISM, MORALS, ORGANIZATION, ZEAL, GOOD WORK IS RIGHT! Therefore, everyone does NOT have a right to their own opinion;

5. It is impossible to know these characteristics of God and Christ without studying the Bible. God cannot be known by "nature" only, and "naturalists", "pantheists", evolutionists", "idolators", et. al. are ignorant of Jesus Christ.

6. The "nature of God" and the "nature of Jesus Christ" determines the nature and practices involved in worship;
7. **THIS DOCTRINE OF GOD AND CHRIST SETS CHRISTIANS APART FROM IDOLATORS, MUSLIMS, JEWS, HINDUS, CATHOLICS, CULTS (i.e. Jehovahs Witnesses, 7th Day Adventists, Mormons, most TV Evangelists, *ad nauseum*), MASONS, AND OTHER RELIGIOUS SECTS AND SHOULD NEVER BE COMPROMISED OR ABANDONED!!**

"Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words.
For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit,
rejoicing to see your *good* order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.
As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,
rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith,
as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving."
(Colossians 2:4-7 NKJV)